

Employment sources coming into the area since 1960 were not indicated in the table. Recent interviews indicate, however, that the trend toward specialization in the textile and furniture fields has continued. Most of the new development and the expansion of local industry that were here prior to 1960 have been in textile products in particular. It is only fair to point out that there is diversification within this single industry, however. For example, local plants produce industrial thread, circular knitwear, yard goods and hosiery -- rather than all producing the same basic product. There is some relation, however, -- a factor that is evidenced by the growing shortage of skilled labor that was noted by most of the employers contacted. There is little evidence of recent industry location here in entirely unrelated fields such as food processing, durable goods (other than furniture), wholesale trade or services.

THE LABOR FORCE

The economy must have people. It is they who provide the knowledge, manpower and the necessary force that operates the social and economic processes. In this section we look at the factors of outmigration, unemployment, skills, commuting patterns and available workers.

Outmigration

Earlier in this report it was pointed out that the Town of Maiden and Catawba County as a whole lost young adults by outmigration between 1950 and 1960. This outmigration is costly to a community in several ways; particularly in the loss of